

## Relationship Addict

Posted by Markz - 08 Jun 2017 12:50

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[i]Relationship addicts live in a world of paradoxes that leaves them feeling they have no way out. They desperately want to get close to someone, but end up with a person whose problems make closeness impossible. They seek security, but end up with someone who always leaves the back door open for a quick get-away.

Relationship addicts crave unconditional love, but live in constant fear of abandonment if they don't live up to their own impossible standards. They want to be free to love, but often trap themselves in a relationship by becoming pregnant or by weaving some other type of emotional spider web. Drowning in the whirlpool of their own emotions, they turn to a rescuer who cannot swim.

Many common characteristics can be found in people who suffer from this form of addiction.

1. Early deprivation. Relationship addicts were often rejected or abandoned in childhood, and may well have been the victims of physical or psychological abuse.
2. Feeling unloved or rejected by the world. Viewing life through the lens of their own painful experience, addicts assume that the world is just one big dysfunctional family.
3. Insecure. Addicts are full of fear and doubt, overwhelmed by the stresses of daily living. The only way they see to survive is to attach themselves to someone else.
4. Attempt to earn love. Relationship addicts become perfectionistic toward themselves, setting standards they can never hope to attain. They believe they have to be "good enough" to be loved by another.
5. Attempt to "fix" others. Relationship addicts try repeatedly to "fix" others, usually persons who do not want to be fixed. But the drive to save someone causes the addict to hang onto a relationship long after others would have left.
6. Attracted to very needy people. Anyone with an obvious need or deficiency becomes a magnet: the needier they are, the less likely they will be to walk away; also the needier they are, the more likely they need fixing.
7. Attracted to abusive or emotionally distant people. Addicts are often attracted to people cut from the same mold as their own parents, often in an attempt to symbolically win the parents' favor and love. By the same token, addicts are often uncomfortable around healthy people who might be strong enough to live without them.
8. Move quickly from attraction to attachment. Addicts "latch on" to someone with remarkable speed, in hopes of cementing a relationship.
9. The main goal of the relationship is to keep it going. It may be a disastrous and destructive relationship, but it seems better to addicts than no relationship at all. As long as it is still alive, there remains hope that it may improve.
10. A striking absence of whole, healthy people in their lives. The roster of past relationships and acquaintances is filled almost exclusively with damaged and needy people, in contrast to whom the addict can appear healthy and normal.
11. Walking on eggshells. Relationship addicts are afraid of rocking the boat. They are excruciatingly cautious about everything they do, in an effort to avoid the wrath of

others.

12. Appear to be meeting others' needs first. But in fact, everything addicts do, even the things that look the most sacrificial, are done to meet their own need to be loved and needed. They appear unselfish, but are in fact willing to let another person spend a lifetime in distress if it guarantees their role as "fixer."
13. Failure to recognize their own needs. Relationship addicts are unable to see the selfishness of their own motives. They may believe they need to be more assertive, when in fact what they need is to resolve their own selfish need to be needed.
14. Outbursts of rage. Relationship addicts try to keep their anger bottled up. But they cannot do so forever. Sooner or later their pent-up anger explodes. Such outbursts are followed by periods of deep remorse and attempts to make things right again – to forestall the dreaded abandonment.
15. Never ask for help. Rather than seek help, addicts prefer to battle their problems alone. They cannot risk being found out – allowing someone else to discern the true nature and extent of their problems.
16. Discomfort at having others do things for them. This only causes the addict more guilt, and greater fear of not "measuring up."
17. No hope of ever finding a truly loving relationship. Early childhood experience has convinced them that it will never happen.
18. Inordinate patience. Addicts astonish their friends by their ability to "hang in" for years without the faintest glimmer of hope for change in their destructive relationship.
19. Euphoria at the start of any new relationship. Relationship addicts constantly assure themselves and others that this time is going to be different. Overblown hopes and expectations are attached to each new prospect.
20. Feeling responsible for all problems. Addicts assess everything that happens in terms of their own efforts. If anything goes wrong, it must have been their fault.
21. Defensive about everything. Addicts place so much performance pressure on themselves that they are resentful of perceived attempts to add more.
22. Feelings of inadequacy. Relationship addicts never look right, weigh the right amount, or say the right things. They find it impossible to live up to their own expectations.
23. Alienated from others. Addicts feel like outcasts – as if everyone else but them has been given the manual on how to make human life work.
24. Starved for affirmation. Addicts draw what little self-esteem they have from the sense that they are trying hard and doing a good job. They feast on others' comments about how loyal and patient they are.
25. Sex is despised. Sex is only a means to an end, not a source of joy and pleasure in its own right. It is to be endured, never enjoyed, if that is the price to maintain the relationship.
26. Control is a virtue. Addicts will seek out needy people whom they are able to manipulate and dominate. They may appear to be subservient to a domineering spouse. In reality, however, it is they who have the upper hand.
27. Never-ending search for happiness. Relationship addicts are martyrs. They so accustom themselves to the apparently hopeless pursuit of happiness that they actually resist finding it.
28. Masters of manipulation. Addicts will invest extraordinary amounts of time and energy determining what patterns of behavior will produce the desired effects in other people. They learn how to elicit attention, how to elicit affection, even how to elicit anger.
29. Frequently depressed. Because of their past rejection and abandonment, relationship

addicts have few emotional resources to draw on in times of stress. Instead, they simply shut down.

- 30. Multiple compulsive behaviors. The emotional turmoil that accompanies relationship addiction cannot lie dormant. Frequently it finds expression in other problems, such as compulsive overeating, spending, or gambling. These compulsive behavior patterns become increasingly intertwined.
- 31. Self-doubt. Relationship addicts are plagued by insecurity and are never sure of themselves. They constantly vacillate in even the most routine decisions.
- 32. See themselves and others as victims. If their partner is a sex addict, it is because others have deviously seduced him. If he is an alcoholic, it is because of the stress others have placed him under.
- 33. Life is an act of compensation. Relationship addicts try to compensate for what they did not have as a child by manipulating others to get what they want. They compensate for weakness by acting strong. They compensate for selfishness by creating the appearance of selflessness.
- 34. Mind-reading. Since the way to find acceptance is to please others and meet their expectations, addicts engage in a never-ending mind game: What does someone else really want? To come right out and ask would be to tip their hand.
- 35. Anger over unmet needs. Addicts never express their own needs. Indeed, they may be largely unaware of them. But they go through life with a vague sense of being "ripped off."

Relationship addicts find themselves trying to fix the whole world, one relationship at a time. Each time will be the last time, they tell themselves, because each time they are convinced that "This is the one that will work." Or, in the case of a codependent who returns again and again to the same destructive relationship, "this time it will be different."[/i]

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I scored 19/35 definite

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Re: Relationship Addict  
Posted by Workingguy - 08 Jun 2017 13:15

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That's a little over 50%. And I think a lot of people would fit that criteria, and The book hold me tight that I just finished reading because you had posted it on the forums once really says that when it comes to relationships, people's emotional needs are so important to them that what other people would label codependent or enmeshed are actually characteristics of a normal relationship that isn't going right.

but a bigger question – why did you decide to test yourself about this?

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Re: Relationship Addict

Posted by cordnoy - 08 Jun 2017 13:16

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27.

Many of those feelin's are still there but many have been and are bein' actively worked on.

In general, I'm not such a believer in these lists. I think defects are found in most humans, especially the selfish and manipulative kind. But I did relate to many of these points. My first therapist/specialist wanted to explore some of them. I basically shut him down. My second therapist was pleased with my program work and spent time strengthenin' that part of me.

Part of me wants to fall again just so i can have a decent excuse to see her again.

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